

**Testimony on SB 1122 and HB 5697 on behalf of the State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs
September 13, 2012**

Good morning Chairman Haines and members of the Committee. My name is Todd Tennis, and I am here today on behalf of the State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs, which represents Ys in over 60 communities across our state.

We are here today to support SB 1122 and HB 5697. We are grateful that this bill takes up the important issue of safety in youth sports, specifically the recognition and treatment of concussions. The State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs is grateful to both Representative Hooker and Senator Proos for bringing this legislation forward. We also appreciate the willingness of the bill sponsors to make minor changes to the bill which allow sponsors of youth athletics to better comply with the proposed law.

It is very important to ensure the safety of our youth athletes when dealing with concussions. The Center for Disease Control recognizes the three top ways to treat concussions as first being able to recognize a concussion, then allowing time to recover, and finally not rushing back into play too soon. It is important to be able to recognize a concussion when it happens, especially because most concussions occur without the telltale sign of a loss of consciousness. Without proper recognition followed by proper and prompt care, concussions can cause serious lasting injuries, or even death.

Because injuries to the brain are more likely to occur while one is still healing from a concussion, taking the proper time to rest is imperative to ensuring the safety of youth athletes. These bills will help to ensure that athletes suffering from concussion symptoms are not rushed back onto the field, thereby giving them the best chance to avoid long lasting or permanent injury.

In summary, the State Alliance of Michigan YMCAs strongly supports SB 1122 and HB 5697 because of the benefits to youth safety they promote. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.